

[Excerpt]

Therapist: Hi Mary, it's nice to meet you. My name is Cecilia, and I'm one of the therapists here. Since it's our first time together, today I just want to get to know a little more about you. Does that sound okay?

Mary: Yeah, I think so. I'm just a little nervous. I've never done this before.

Therapist: So it's your first time in therapy?

Mary: Yes. I don't know where to start.

Therapist: That makes sense. It's normal to feel a little overwhelmed and unsure of what to expect. There's no pressure today though - I just want to learn more about you. Why don't you start by telling me a little about what brings you here today? What made you seek out therapy?

Mary: I just feel like my life is pretty lonely lately, and I really want to make some friends. But it's too hard for me to meet new people. I'm afraid to talk to anyone or to be in crowds alone. I'd really like that to change, but I don't know what to do.

Therapist: I see. So you would like to bring some relationships into your life, but being anxious about speaking to new people is keeping that from happening. Is that right?

Mary: Yeah. I take classes at the community college, but I don't know anyone there. I hear about parties and stuff, but I'm too nervous to ever go.

Therapist: Okay, so let's talk about that a little more. What happens when you imagine yourself going to one of those parties?